

honor those who have served this Nation on the front line of freedom and democracy.

This Veterans Day, the Democratic-led Congress is working to honor our troops, military families, and veterans with quality-health care.

Today, the House will give final approval to a veterans funding bill that provides the largest increase for veterans in the 77-year history of the VA, and I hear our friends on the other side of the aisle complaining that that's 8 weeks overdue. Well, they had 12 years to do this and they chose not to.

Over the last decade, while the number of veterans has doubled, our Nation's investment in their health care needs has simply not been enough. Unlike the President, this new Democratic Congress vowed to fulfill our promise to our veterans; and, today, we will pass a final veterans funding bill that has been endorsed by all major veterans groups.

This new Democratic Congress has also made major strides in addressing the military health care crisis and the inadequacies of the disability system brought to light by the Walter Reed scandal.

Madam Speaker, as Veterans Day approaches, our Nation's veterans and military families should know that the promises that have been made to them will be fulfilled.

WE SHOULDN'T PLAY THESE POLITICAL GAMES

(Mr. BOEHNER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BOEHNER. Madam Speaker, next Monday is Veterans Day, and I think all of us in America owe those who have fought for our country, given their lives, given their service to our country, we all owe them a great deal of gratitude.

But how is this Congress today, this House, going to give and show our veterans our gratitude? We're going to pass a military quality of life veterans bill, and we're going to attach a pork-laden, overstuffed Labor-Health and Human Services bill on the backs of this bill.

The Senate's not going to take this bill up in this form. They're going to split the two bills. The President's made clear he's not going to sign this bill combining these two appropriations bills. This is one of the most cynical and most political things I've seen in the 17 years that I've been here in Congress.

To know that the President is not going to sign this bill, to know that the Senate is not going to allow this two-bill pile-up to be considered in the Senate, and yet we're going to force the Members of the House today in a position where they shouldn't be.

We shouldn't play these political games on the backs of our veterans and our soldiers. I think that we should split this bill and do it the right way

and show our veterans on Veterans Day that we really do appreciate their sacrifice and their service.

WATERBOARDING IS A CRIME

(Mr. McDERMOTT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. McDERMOTT. Madam Speaker, it's not as hard as the President would like us to believe. Someone reminded me over the weekend of something. Here's what he said.

When the Japanese Army subjected American prisoners of war to waterboarding, it was a crime, and those responsible were severely punished. After World War II, several Japanese soldiers were convicted for waterboarding American and Allied prisoners of war.

At the trial of his captors, Lieutenant Chase Nielson, one of the 1942 Army Air Force officers who flew the Doolittle raid over Tokyo, was captured by the Japanese, said, "I was given several types of torture. I was given what they call the water cure."

He was asked what it felt like when the Japanese soldiers poured the water. "Well, I felt more or less like I was drowning," he replied.

And yet we have an administration complete with Attorneys General and designees who aren't sure if waterboarding is a crime. They can check the record of war tribunals after World War II, because the rest of the world is sure. It was a crime then, and it is a crime today.

Over the weekend I saw "Rendition." It ought to be required viewing for this body.

MILCON-VA APPROPRIATIONS BILL NEEDS TO STAND ALONE

(Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, our veterans and our troops have protected us from enemies, foreign and domestic, in the past decades and currently today.

When has it become a part of our congressional activity to not fully protect their interests? Our VA appropriations bill passed the House over 140 days ago with strong bipartisan support. However, the House majority party never appointed conferees for the bill, where the Senate immediately appointed them.

The military and veterans appropriations bill is now back on the floor with an additional bill attached. Our servicemembers, veterans and our troops, deserve the best that Congress can deliver to them. The MilCon-VA appropriations bill should not be an accessory for massive labor spending.

Has politics blocked our activities in Washington where we cannot pass a military funding bill for our soldiers?

I stand here today with so many others who join me in saying, our MilCon-

VA appropriations bill needs to stand alone, unattached to another bill.

ON SCHIP GOP DOES NOT SHARE DEMOCRATS' LEGISLATIVE GOALS

(Ms. RICHARDSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. RICHARDSON. Madam Speaker, House Democrats and some of our Republican friends continue to fight for a much-needed health care system that we need for our children. Unfortunately, though, the President and too many Republicans in this body still refuse to support a plan that has already received tremendous bipartisan support in the Senate and from the public.

Last month, after meeting with Republican Members and our Democratic leadership, once again we brought forward a bill that would cover 10 million children, 10 million American children who live in this country who deserve to be covered.

But Republicans, my colleagues, have avoided taking this vote. We need to make sure that our children are covered. Instead, they proposed a program that would provide health care for 1.7 million fewer children in America.

Madam Speaker, 81 percent of Americans support a bipartisan effort to provide health care for 10 million children. I hope our Republican colleagues will join us.

SLIDING GREASY PORK THROUGH WASHINGTON IS THE WRONG THING FOR THE DEMOCRATS TO BE DOING

(Mr. AKIN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. AKIN. Madam Speaker, it's been 144 days since the House passed the Veterans Affairs appropriations bill. This is a bill which does research on prosthetic kinds of devices. It helps to rebuild veterans facilities. It helps to treat things like traumatic stress disorder. That's the purpose for the money that has been waiting now since we passed it 144 days ago.

Unfortunately, that bill has been held up in order to connect it with other legislation laden with pork on the HHS bill.

Now, it's been many years since I was a combat engineer in the Army, but my son is freshly back from Fallujah, and to hold our veterans hostage in order to try to slide greasy pork through Washington is the wrong thing for the Democrats to be doing.

They need to allow the bill to stand on its own base, let the people take a vote, and respect the veterans that we want to respect.